



Bernd Fischer



Preface

Special issue celebrating the 70th birthday of Bernd Fischer

This issue of the *Journal of Algebra* is dedicated to Professor Bernd Fischer on the occasion of his 70th birthday. Bernd Fischer is probably best known to the mathematical community at large as the discoverer of (at least) 5 of the 26 sporadic finite simple groups; in particular, he discovered more of these groups than any other mathematician. But to finite group theorists, Fischer is equally well known for his beautiful theorem classifying the almost simple groups generated by 3-transpositions. This innovative piece of mathematics introduced a new point of view to group theory: the study of groups in which any pair of conjugates of some fixed subgroup generate a subgroup with one of only a small number of isomorphism types. In the same paper, Fischer also introduced strikingly original techniques for analyzing such groups. His approach became one of the important tools in the classification of the finite simple groups, influencing an entire generation of young group theorists. In addition, Fischer had a more direct impact on students in Frankfurt and Bielefeld. Many contributions in this issue show the lasting significance of Fischer's work in modern group theory.

We are grateful to Professor Michel Broué for his advice, and we also express our thanks to the San Diego staff of Elsevier for their help and cooperation in producing this issue.

We are very pleased to present this special issue with great respect and admiration to celebrate an exceptional mathematician.

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Available online 28 February 2006